

Beaches and Creeks TMDL Cost-Benefit Analysis
Public Scoping Meeting
September 16, 2015

CBA Steering Committee Members Present

Jeremy Haas, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Jimmy Smith, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Chris Clark, San Diego County Taxpayers Association
Ruth Kolb, City of San Diego (alternate for Drew Kleis)
Todd Snyder, County of San Diego, Watershed Protection Program
Chris Crompton, County of Orange, Storm Water

Supporting Roles

Facilitator: Lewis Michaelson, Katz & Associates
Bree Robertoy, Katz & Associates
Michelle Mata, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Cynthia Gorham, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Clint Boschen, Tetra Tech
Chris Minton, Larry Walker Associates
Jo Ann Weber, County of San Diego

Presentation

- An overview was given of the Basin Plan Triennial Review, the steering committee's purpose, elements of a cost-benefit analysis (CBA), and the process of conducting the Beaches and Creeks total maximum daily load (TMDL) CBA.
- J. Smith asked for recommendations for additional non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives interested in joining the committee.
- Comments were solicited from the public regarding the CBA process, how to quantify benefits, which alternatives to select, whether dry weather should be considered, the reference approach and studies that would change the reference approach.

Public Questions and Comments

Uncertainty

- Some sources are difficult to control, such as seagulls. How will the CBA address high levels of bacteria indicators that have unknown sources?
 - R. Kolb: Technical studies to update data are underway, including studies that will assess levels of bacteria, viruses and pathogens, and epidemiology studies.
 - J. Haas – The CBA will involve some judgments and uncertainty with regard to results.
- How will willingness to pay be measured if people don't understand sources or don't believe paying the costs will result in the benefits identified?

- Due to the uncertain nature of the CBA, the constraints of the analysis should be defined with some level of public involvement. The committee should consider holding a public meeting to vet the scope of work.

Alternatives

- Will the CBA look at what the appropriate bacterial indicator is? Until that is determined, it's too early to perform a CBA.
 - No, that research is in progress. The CBA will start with the data as it stands now. Timing is a big driver for the order of things.
- The CBA should look at what would need to be done to meet compliance, not just the treatment aspect.
- Will the CBA look at current bacteria TMDL models? It would help to have the best model possible.
- The CBA could consider what other regions (e.g., Australia) are doing to comply with water quality regulations.
- The alternatives should look at the costs of meeting certain percentages of reduction rates (e.g., what is the cost of 10 percent compliance with the current TMDLs).
- Will the CBA evaluate the effectiveness of certain best management practices (BMP) (e.g., street sweeping)?
 - Yes, BMP cost information will be submitted to the consultant and will be included in the analysis.
 - T. Snyder: In terms of BMP effectiveness, most of the data are related to reducing loads of indicator bacteria as opposed to removal of the pathogens themselves. Indicator bacteria don't necessarily make the public sick.
- Will the CBA take into account aquatic life?
 - Rec-1 bacteria TMDLs are concerned with human health.
- C. Crompton: The CBA also needs to consider benefits to the creeks. Perhaps the study should distinguish between geographical areas (i.e., between areas that people recreate at versus non-recreation areas).

Other Comments

- The Navy has a lot of property in the region and is concerned about the cost of compliance. The Navy is putting together a budget that goes through 2018, so these costs need to be accounted for.
- Who can the Navy provide comments to on the committee?
 - Len Sinfield should contact R. Kolb.
- Now that we [Navy attendees] have a better idea of what this meeting is about, we need to go back and discuss the issue with our respective departments. There should be another public meeting.
 - J. Smith: The committee is going to try to hold another public meeting once the draft CBA is completed, but the schedule is tight. The CBA steering committee may solicit written comments instead. The committee is also designed to be representative of all caucuses.

- R. Kolb: The CBA is only one line of evidence for reopening the TMDL. If the TMDL is reopened, the public will be involved at multiple times during the process.
- Because of the large range of possibilities, the study is going to be driven by the size of the contract.
 - The contract is \$500k?
 - That sounds like enough, but it will still be limited. The available funds for the contract seems like a key factor for looking at so many sources.

Closing

- The public can sign up for project email alerts at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/.